(b) the break-up of such cases with regard to soldiers and officers of Navy, Army and Air Force, respectively; and

(c) the details of action being taken for disposal of these cases within a time limit?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The number and categorywise details of cases relating to Disability Pension, Retiring/ Service Pension and Family Pension in respect of Navy, Army, and Air Force personnel pending as on 30.11.99 in the Offices of the Controller of Defence Accounts (CDA), (Navy), Principal Controller of Defence Accounts (PCDA) (Pension), and Controller of Defence Accounts (CDA) (Air force) areas under:—

	CDA (Navy)'s office Navy		PCDA(P)'s Office* Army		CDA(AF)'s office Air Force	
	Officers	Sailors	Officers	Other Ranks	Officers	Airmen
1. Disability Pension	Nil	Nil	Nil	Army-1775	Nil	2
				Navy-34		
				AF-122		
				Total-1931		
2. Retiring/Service Pension	Nil	Nil	7	295	Nil	598
3. Family Pension	Nil	Nil	Nil	Army-1027	Nil	2
				Navy-Nil		
				AF-29		
				Total-1056		

* PCDA(P) apart from dealing with pension cases pertaining to Army, also adjudicates the disability and family pension cases of Navy and Airforce.

The cases as mentioned above are of recent origin and are under different stages of consideration/adjudication. As per the pervailing instructions, claims relating to Disability Pension and Family Pension which involve adjudication are settled/Pension Payment Order (PPO) issued by the above mentioned offices within sixty days and claims relating to Retiring/Service pension are settled/PPO issued within thirty days of their receipt, if found complete in all respects.

DPG Meeting between India and US

2156. DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that very recently a Defence Policy Group (DPG) meeting was held in Washington between India and US; and

(b) if so, the outcome of the meting?

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) does not arise.

Upgradation of MIG-29

2157. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Russian Government has approached India with their proposal for upgrading of MIG-29 fighter jets under the framework of long term military technical agreement;

(b) if so, what has been the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) what has been our earlier experience with such upgradation of other Russian fighter planes in the Indian Air Force?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) No formal proposal has been received from Russia for upgradation of MIG-29 aircraft.

(c) Earlier a contract for upgradation of Mig-21 Bis aircraft was signed with Russia as a prime vendor. An overall delay of about 18 months in project implementation is anticipated due to various reasons, attributable to both the parties.

Promotion of Ex-servicemen in DGOFs

2158. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the DGOFs have investigated the causes of withholding of further promotions, for years together, of employees belonging to Ex-servicemen category;

(b) whether there is a growing discontent amongst Ex-servicemen working in Ordinance Factory for stepmotherly attitude of the authorities;

(c) whether Government would immediately intervene in the matter; and

(d) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) The promotions of Ex-servicemen have not been withheld.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Does not arise in view of (a) & (b) above.

Middle-men in defence deals

2159. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the defence deals cannot be performed without middlemen;

(b) how many persons are either authorised or empanelled by the Defence Ministry to do so; and